

Latino/Hispanic 101: Overcoming Barriers and Increasing Understanding

**Satellite Conference
Wednesday, May 12, 2004
2:00-4:00 p.m. (Central Time)**

**Produced by the Alabama Department of Public Health
Video Communications Division**

Hispanic versus Latino

- Hispanic is a term adopted by the U. S. Federal government with the purpose of distinguishing those who have a connection to the Spanish language or come from a Spanish speaking country.
- Latino refers to those who are born in Latin America and speak Spanish.

Reasons for Migrating

- Out of the 98,000,000 Mexicans living in Mexico, 60% live in poverty. There is little likelihood of improving their economic status in Mexico.
- “American Dream”: the economic and educational opportunities in the United States are greater than in Mexico.
- Today the South is home to one-third of the U.S. Hispanic population. In Alabama the Hispanic population has tripled.

Patterns of Migration

- The migrant worker: are those that travel to the U.S. and work in the fields. After the seasonal work is finished, many return to Mexico. However, since the region of the South is rich with agricultural and industrial jobs, Hispanic migrant workers (with their families or alone) are taking these jobs.

Patterns of Migration

- Individuals, usually men, come to work as day laborers while seeking steady employment.
- The areas of work in which Hispanics are employed: agriculture, poultry processing, construction and landscaping. Usually these are jobs that others would not take.

Aspects of Culture

- Sense of Self and Space
- Communication and Language
- Time and Time Consciousness
- Relationships
- Values and Norms
- Beliefs and Attitudes
- Mental Process and Learning
- Work Habits and Practices

Sense of Self and Space

American Culture:

- Stand 1.5 to 3 feet, or an arm's length from people with whom we are talking in a business or friendship relationship. A hearty handshake is given when greeting someone.

Sense of Self and Space

Hispanic Culture:

- More physical contact between members of the same sex. A hug, a kiss on the cheek and a pat on the back are an important part of communication. Use of hands in self expression.

Sense of Self and Space

American Culture:

- One pronoun, "you", for all relationships.
- New acquaintances, bosses and older individuals are called by their first name.

Sense of Self and Space

Hispanic Culture:

- Two forms of the pronoun, "you", the formal and the familiar.
- Formal introductions using Mr., Mrs., and titles are expected as a sign of respect for both parties. Hispanics are more formal in their treatment of one another.

Communication & Language

American Culture:

- Not making eye contact in the American culture is taken as a sign of deceitfulness, no assertion or disinterest.

Communication & Language

Hispanic Culture:

- Averting one's eyes is a sign of respect and the proper behavior when in the presence of an older person or authority figure.

Communication & Language

American Culture:

- Explicit and direct verbal communication with emphasis on content. (Meaning found in words)
- “Yes” means “yes” and “no” means “no”.

Communication & Language

Hispanic Culture:

- Implicit and indirect verbal communication with emphasis on context. (Meaning found around words)
- Yes may mean “I have no idea but I will do my best not to let you down.” (Tell the other person what they want to hear)

Communication & Language

American Culture:

- Practical efficient and clear when speaking.
- Associate too much talk with lack of purpose and seriousness.
- More comfortable talking about facts than personal issues. Doesn’t always allow a chance for the personalities, as well as points of discussion to emerge.

Communication & Language

Hispanic Culture:

- Too many details.
- Prefer general principles supported by credible personal experiences.

Communication & Language

American Culture:

- Minimize pleasantries and “get down to business”. May be viewed as impatient and cold by the Hispanics.
- Emphasis on being serious and professional.

Communication & Language

Hispanic Culture:

- Likes to take time in personal conversation before getting into business. (Way to know each other and to build trust.) May be viewed as lacking in seriousness and professionalism by the Americans.
- Wants to appear gracious, friendly and willing to know you as an individual.

Communication & Language

American Culture:

- Diminutives associated with children. However, words and phrases are used to magnify.
- Assumption that everybody in America speaks English and those that do not will learn it quickly.
- For an adult no language is easy to learn.

Communication & Language

Hispanic Culture:

- Like verbal play, use of diminutives (especially in Mexico)

Communication & Language

American Culture:

- All languages are about the same in their ability to communicate ideas.
- Language seems to measure, quantify and rank. Appears to be constantly calculating and comparing.

Communication & Language

Hispanic Culture:

- Interested in their own language because of the pleasure of verbal play and poetry.
- Those who show an interest in the Spanish language are viewed as more cordial than those who do not.

Communication & Language

American Culture:

- Emotions should always be in control, excessive emotionality is un-called for. Does not associate the display of passion with themselves.
- Weigh consequences against benefits. We require sound reasons for what we do.

Communication & Language

Hispanic Culture:

- “To be without passion, in sadness or joy is to be less than complete as a human being.”
- Assumes that Americans do not know how to enjoy themselves.

Time and Time Consciousness

American Culture:

- Time is seen as a commodity to be used, divided, spent and saved.
- Very concerned about deadlines.
- Gives the impression of always being in a hurry and more concerned about the tasks than with people.

Time and Time Consciousness

Hispanic Culture:

- Time is considered more elastic and more relative.
- Time is used not just to accomplish a task but also to develop relationships and enjoy one's self.
- Activities, appointments and deadlines are influenced by other events, priorities and the will of God.

Time and Time Consciousness

American Culture:

- Football: chunks of action planned one play at a time.
- Take care of one thing at a time. Time is lineal not segmented. Time is measured with precision, like a schedule of appointments. Americans are easily distressed with interruptions.

Time and Time Consciousness

Hispanic Culture:

- Soccer: continuous flow of constant action.
- Many things happening at once, looser notion of what is on time or late, interruptions are a routine, delays are to be expected. "Human activities are not expected to proceed as clockwork."

Relationships

American Culture:

- Hiring relatives is considered nepotism.
- Family means the nuclear group of one's parents and siblings.
- Children are expected to make their own way and encouraged to leave the house around the age of twenty.

Relationships

Hispanic Culture:

- Hiring kin is common practice.
- Family involves a large network of extended family. Loyalty is expected towards one's kin, and obedience and respect are paid to older members of the family.
- Children are not expected to leave their home in their early twenties. This is perceived as if there is a problem between parent and child.

Relationships

American Culture:

- Speak of close relationships in terms of a “partner”.
- Family forms a less important part of an individual’s frame of reference. (Do not know the person well enough to ask about the family.)
- Value on youth. Age is seen as a handicap.

Relationships

Hispanic Culture:

- Speak of close relationships as “brother or sister”, reflecting a lasting and unbreakable bond.
- Family is an important part of an individual frame of reference (If I do not ask about the person’s family; how will I know him?)
- There is a hierarchy of status. Age determines power and respect.

Values and Norms

American Culture:

- “Individualism” - relates to one only.
- People are basically the same. They are judged by individual merits and the merits are revealed by the person’s actions.

Values and Norms

Hispanic Culture:

- “Individuality”- the qualities that make one distinctive.
- The uniqueness of the individual is valued. This uniqueness resides inside each person and it is not necessarily evident by actions or achievements.
- The dignity of the person is represented by that inner quality. Dignity is protected at all costs.

Values and Norms

Hispanic Culture:

- Any action or remark that is interpreted as a slight to the person’s dignity is to be regarded as a grave provocation.
- A Hispanic will regard himself/herself first of all as part of a family and secondary to his or her profession, a slight to other family members will be as provocative as a personal insult.

Values and Norms

American Culture:

- Respect = value of equality, fair play and democratic spirit.
- Matter of principles. (Demonstrated by achievements and fair-minded relationships)
- Clear separation of the individual from the behavior.

Values and Norms

Hispanic Culture:

- **Respect = virtue of position, age or influence. Personal and a matter of circumstances. (Demonstrated by taking interest in the individual)**
- **"I am my behavior and my behavior is me."**

Values and Norms

American Culture:

- **Loyalty means: "truth", "justice" and the "American way". "No one is above the law."**
- **Obey the law and practice fair play.**
- **Rules are trusted and we like to trust others to obey the rules. In this way, everybody has the same opportunities and obligations.**

Values and Norms

Hispanic Culture:

- **Loyal to individuals. Personal allegiance might mean breaking a rule to help a friend. Ignores abstract thinking in favor of the real person.**

Values and Norms

American Culture:

- **To subjugate one's individual needs to those of the group would feel confining and stifling. (Individual orientation)**
- **Privacy is space. A culture that fences off each person's area.**

Values and Norms

Hispanic Culture:

- **The dominance of the group (family) over the individual assures order and brings feelings of stability. (Group orientation)**
- **Families may share the same room. Houses are very close together.**

Values and Norms

American Culture:

- **Regards inner qualities as a private matter and talking about them is not easy.**

Hispanic Culture:

- **Inner qualities refer to the person's soul or spirit.**
- **The inability to talk about the inner qualities of a person is regarded by Hispanics as being insensitive.**

The Hispanic Family

American Culture:

- Family = parents and children.
- The young adult is encouraged to leave the home in their early twenties.
- There is parental support, but the child is expected to make his/her own way.
- Child's independence regarded as a credit to the parents. (Good)

The Hispanic Family

Hispanic Culture:

- Family = parents, several children, grandparents, cousins, godparents, uncles/aunts, etc.
- Brothers and sisters remain in close contact.
- Loyalty to each other and to the family is very strong.
- Young adults are not encouraged to leave the home in their early twenties.

The Hispanic Family

- The extended family and community have an influence on health practices during pregnancy and childbirth.
- When going to the clinic it is common for Latinas to be in the company of their husbands, a female relative or a friend.
- Hispanic women think of pregnancy as a natural event and may not seek prenatal care until late in the pregnancy.

The Hispanic Family

- Value family over individual or community needs.
- It is common for several family units to be in close proximity to each other.
- There is a strong reliance on family in times of crises or day-to-day activities.
- The church influences family life and community affairs.

The Hispanic Family

Expectations for the men:

- The greatest power in the family is held by the father or the oldest male. He can make health decisions for members of the family.

The Hispanic Family

Expectations for the women:

- The expected role is homemaking, however, there is an increase of Hispanic women working outside the home.
- To be respectful/submissive at least in public when her husband is present. In private they may hold more power.

The Hispanic Family

Expectations for the men:

- “Machismo” is more than a stereotype. It relates to the man’s self esteem, manhood and sense of self.

Expectations for the women:

- If she appears to be too independent in terms of her mobility and expression of her opinion in front of her husband, the “machismo” of her husband may be called into question.

The Hispanic Family

Expectations for the men:

- Provide for and be in charge of the family.

Expectations for the women:

- The primary force that holds the family and home together.
- The woman is the primary caregiver and responsible for most of the parenting.
- Expected to remain in the traditional domestic role.

Machismo

American Culture:

- Very uncomfortable with the concept of “machismo”.

Hispanic Culture:

- Manifestation of authority. Very important to appear to be strong and competent not only sexually (many children = proof of man’s virility) but also intellectually. Show no fear. (example: death)
- Father and son relationship: is safe for the son to demonstrate strength but not surpass his father’s.

Machismo

American Culture:

- Assumption: Hispanic men are more devoted to their mothers than to their wives.

Machismo

Hispanic Culture:

- Mothers depend on their sons to care for them in their old age. This is a component of the son’s machismo.
- The son is expected to defend her honor at all times.
- The sons are very devoted to their mothers.
- Assumption: American men are more devoted to their wives than to their mothers.

Belief and Attitudes

American Culture:

- The culture is more egalitarian.
- Minimizes differences between themselves and persons in subordinate roles.
- Not customary to call professionals by their title.

Belief and Attitudes

Hispanic Culture:

- Social order and authority is highly valued. Children do not talk back to their parents, employees do not confront their bosses and students do not question their teachers. Professionals are called by their title.
- Hierarchical society. These boundaries must be observed.

Belief and Attitudes

American Culture:

- Treatment of differences among people in a manner that does not show prejudice or discrimination.

Belief and Attitudes

Hispanic Culture:

- The differences in age, sex roles, etc. are very important.
- People are equal but . . . a man is a man, a woman a woman and sons and fathers are not interchangeable.
- Suspicion of sexual attraction when a man and a woman are together alone. Chaperones help deal with this expectation.

Mental Process & Learning

American Culture:

- Power to control our world. "Fix it", approach to problems. Problems seen as obstacles to overcome.
- Logical analysis to a problem.
- Teaching is experience and directed towards the student drawing his/her own conclusion.

Mental Process & Learning

Hispanic Culture:

- Problems are viewed as situations to which one must adapt. Fate and luck play an important role.
- Intuition and holistic thinking in regards to a problem.
- Teaching is formal, theoretical and worldwide. Teaching is from the teacher to the student.

Work Habits and Practices

American Culture:

- Emphasis on tasks. Rewards for performance. Work has intrinsic value.

- Objective reality.

Hispanic Culture:

- Emphasis on relationships. Rewards are based on seniority, relationships. Work is a necessity of life.
- Interpersonal relations.

Understanding the Surnames Puzzle

- **Family name combinations:** In the Hispanic culture everyone uses their paternal surname and their maternal surname. Upper class Mexicans use both the paternal and maternal last names as their surname connecting them with a hyphen.
- **When they write their name they use only the initial letter of the maternal surname.**

Understanding the Surnames Puzzle

For example:

Yolanda del Socorro Salgado-Alicea
Yolanda del Socorro Salgado A.

First name:	Yolanda
Middle name:	del Socorro
Paternal surname:	Salgado
Maternal surname:	Alicea

Understanding the Surnames Puzzle

- **Always include their paternal as well as their maternal surname.** Every type of documentation or verification of identity will have all of these names and it is imperative that we get their names correctly.
For example:
Salgado-Alicea, Yolanda del Socorro
- **“There is no room for so many names”.** Then use the first name, initial of the middle name and the paternal last name.

Understanding the Surnames Puzzle

For example

First name:	Yolanda
Middle name:	del S.
Paternal last name:	Salgado–Alicea/ Salgado A.

The paternal surname is the one next to the last, not the “last” name.

Understanding the Surnames Puzzle

- **Married women do not always change their last name to reflect that they are married.** If they do, they might use it in the following way:

Understanding the Surnames Puzzle

Maiden name:

Yolanda del Socorro Salgado Alicea

Married name:

Yolanda del S. Salgado de Martinez

(Yolanda Salgado the wife of Martinez) in this case the maternal surname Alicea is replaced by the husband’s last name. Yolanda del S. Salgado Martinez or Yolanda del S. Salgado-Martinez

Dealing with Not Understanding or Being Understood

- Speaking louder and slower is not going to result in better understanding.
- Helpful hints:
- Understand the source of your frustration.
- Remember that the language we speak gives us identity and defines our nationality.
- Language represents our territory. Communication gives us the ability to influence events and people.

How Can We Best Serve The Hispanic Client?

- Educate yourself regarding the Hispanic culture.
- Be sensitive to the person first and then worry about the task at hand.
- Have access to a trained interpreter. Never place children in the position of having to interpret for their parents.

Communication

- Communication, whether verbal or non verbal, is characterized by respect. In the establishment of a new client/provider relationship over familiarity, physical touch or the use of first names may not be appreciated.

Communication

- It is not customary for Hispanics to be assertive/aggressive in health care interactions. There is less direct eye contact and less direct disagreement with the healthcare provider.
- Silence and non-compliance are the most common responses to a decision the patient/family disagrees with.

Communication

- Failures in communication may be perceived as prejudice.
- Quality of care for the Hispanic client involves trust and an interpersonal relationship with their healthcare provider. It is essential to gain and maintain trust. If you are not able to get the patient's trust, you will not know of major complaints or problems and the patient most likely will not return for another visit.

What to Expect When Assisting the Hispanic Client

- Determine from what area of Mexico or other country the family is from. Their health beliefs and practices are influenced by the area/country they grew up in.
- Many Hispanics seeking health care may have already sought help from the family.

What to Expect When Assisting the Hispanic Client

- The Hispanic family is involved in the health care of other family members. Include the family as a resource and focus of care in health planning. (Individuals or communities)
- Remember the importance of understanding and complying with the family's gender roles. Show the respect that is expected for all of the adults in the family.

What to Expect When Assisting The Hispanic Client

- Hispanics may not use a physician as the primary source for health care. They will include faith in God as a vital component of understanding their health problem and the cure.

What to Expect When Assisting The Hispanic Client

- Hispanics may call on:
- Abuela- who may prepare a home remedy, such as a tea.
- Yerbero (herbalist)
- Sobador (massage therapist)
- Partera (midwife who also treats young children)
- Curandero (lay healer, who intervenes in the physical as well as the spiritual aspect of the illness)
- Physician

What to Expect When Assisting The Hispanic Client

- Medications are shared within a social network of family and close friends. Be aware that the patient might be taking herbal medicine, prescribed medication obtained from a friend or prescribed medication from their physician and prayer.

What to Expect When Assisting The Hispanic Client

- All of these home remedies may not be shared with the health care provider if there is not trust and an interpersonal relationship established.
- The church is central to the life of the family and the community. If possible, use the church as a resource in the delivery of health services.

What to Expect When Assisting The Hispanic Client

- They probably will be late for the appointment.
- They want for you to demonstrate interest in them as a person, prior to attending to the task at hand. For example, ask about how they are doing in their job or how their family is doing. They want to feel valued. Show sincere interest in their particular situation, even if you communicate through an interpreter.

Most Common Health Problems Among Hispanics

- Access and utilization of health care because:
- Language barriers, transportation, child care, immigration status and cultural differences.

Most Common Health Problems Among Hispanics

- Low rate of medical insurance coverage. There are more uninsured Hispanic-American women than any other race or ethnic group. This is due to the fact that the majority of Hispanics are employed in jobs that do not offer health insurance benefits.
- Low income.

Most Common Health Problems Among Hispanics

- Limited knowledge of health services.
- No regular source of health care.

Most Common Health Problems Among Hispanics

- The rate of heart disease among Mexican-American women is higher because of the higher rates of obesity and diabetes among Hispanics.
- The risk of stroke is 1.3 times higher at the age of 35-64 than for non-Hispanics.

Most Common Health Problems Among Hispanics

- Hispanic men account for 81% of AIDS cases reported by Hispanic-Americans, however, the number of cases among women is rising. The rate of HIV infections is seven times higher among Hispanic-American women in comparison to white women. This is due to heterosexual contact and injection drug use.

Most Common Health Problems Among Hispanics

- Mexican-American women are two times more likely to have diabetes than non-Hispanic white women. Diabetes is more prevalent in Hispanic women than in men. Hispanic women have higher rates of gestational diabetes than non-Hispanic white women.

Most Common Health Problems Among Hispanics

- Mexicans and Puerto Ricans have a higher rate of illicit drug use, heavy alcohol use, alcohol dependence and need for drug abuse treatment.
- Depression is twice as high in Hispanic women than in Hispanic men.

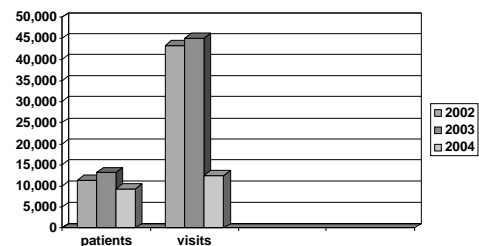
Most Common Health Problems Among Hispanics

- Breast cancer is the leading cause of cancer-related deaths among Hispanic-American women, due to being diagnosed at a later stage. Cervical cancer is 40% higher among Hispanic women than in non-Hispanic women.

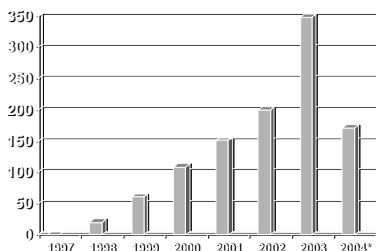
Most Common Health Problems Among Hispanics

- Access to health care is the major barrier to early detection and treatment of breast and cervical cancer among Hispanic women.
- Uninsured Hispanic women are more likely to be diagnosed with breast cancer when the cancer is in the advanced stages.

Number of Hispanics Served By WIC (by Fiscal Year)



Number of Hispanics Served By The ABCCEDP (by Fiscal Year)



*From 10/01/2003 to 03/16/2004

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act

- No person in the United States shall on the ground of race, color or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.
- Section 601 of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- 42 U.S.C. Section 2000d et seq.

Who Is A Limited English Proficient (LEP) Person?

- A LEP individual is a person who does not speak English as their primary language and who has limited ability to read, write, speak or understand English.

Effect of Language Barriers: On LEP Individuals

- Denial of needed benefits and services
- Delay in delivery
- Wrong benefits or services
- Ineffective or less effective services

Impact on Language Barriers: On Health Providers

- Increased costs and inefficiencies
- Inferior quality
- Potential liability

Upcoming Programs

**Diabetes and Cardiovascular Risk:
Affecting Change in Communities to
Increase Physical Activity**

**Tuesday, May 18, 2004
2:00-4:00 p.m. (Central Time)**

**For a complete listing of all programs:
www.adph.org/alphn**